

TESTING BRIEF
Spring 2006 Georgia High School Graduation Tests
in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science
March 20 – 31, 2006

Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-281 G, (a) mandates that a “curriculum-based assessment be administered in grade 11 for graduation purposes” and (c) “that the State Board of Education shall have the authority to condition the awarding of a high school diploma to a student upon achievement of satisfactory scores on instruments or tests adopted and administered by the State board pursuant to (a) of this code.” The law further provides opportunities for students with disabilities “to take any test adopted by the State Board as a condition for awarding of a high school diploma” and to receive accommodations specified in their IEP as necessary for participation.

The Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT) assess only a sample of the knowledge and skills that educators agree comprise a complete high school education. Georgia students have opportunities to learn – and are expected to master – much more than the tests address. The state adopted curriculum is the source of the knowledge and skills assessed on the graduation tests.

Students take the GHSGT for the first time in the spring of the 11th grade. Schools use the results to identify students who need additional instruction in the academic content determined by Georgia educators as necessary for a high school diploma. Students who do not succeed on their first attempt have four additional opportunities to meet the standards prior to completing 12th grade.

Scores on the 2006 GHSGT administration increased in three of the four content areas from 2005. The greatest gains occurred in Science, in which Regular Program Grade 11 first-time test takers increased 5 percentage points, while Limited English Proficient (ELL) students increased 6 percentage points, and Special Education students increased 4 percentage points. Social Studies scores increased in all three subgroups as well: Regular Program Grade 11 first-time test takers increased 2 percentage points over 2005; Special Education students and Limited English Proficient (ELL) increased 3 percentage points. Scores in English Language Arts increased 1 percentage point for Regular Program students. Limited English Proficient (ELL) students increased by 7 percentage points while Special Education students increased 5 percentage points from 2005. Math scores remained consistent with 2005 scores for Regular Program and Special Education students while Limited English Proficient (ELL) students decreased by only 1 percentage point.

KEY FINDINGS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- A total of **80,255** Regular Program Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the ELA test. **Ninety-eight (98)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **548**. This is an **increase from 2005 of 1 percentage point** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.
- A total of **7,296** Special Education Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the ELA test. **Seventy-five (75)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **518**. This is an **increase from 2005 of 5 percentage points** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.
- A total of **1,447** Limited English Proficient/English Language Learner Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the ELA test. **Seventy-one (71)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **512**. This is an **increase from 2005 of 7 percentage points** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.

MATHEMATICS

- A total of **80,309** Regular Program Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Mathematics test. **Ninety-five (95)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **536**. This number **remains at the level achieved in 2005**.
- A total of **7,312** Special Education Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Mathematics test. **Fifty-eight (58)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **505**. This number **remains at the level achieved in 2005**.
- A total of **1,479** Limited English Proficient/English Language Learner Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Mathematics test. **Seventy-seven (77)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **516**. This is a **decrease from 2005 of 1 percentage point** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- A total of **79,929** Regular Program Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Social Studies test. **Eighty-nine (89)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **523**. This is an **increase from 2005 of 2 percentage points** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.
- A total of **7,212** Special Education Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Social Studies test. **Forty-nine (49)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **501**. This is an **increase from 2005 of 3 percentage point** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.
- A total of **1,438** Limited English Proficient/English Language Learner Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Social Studies test. **Forty-nine (49)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **500**. This is an **increase from 2005 of 3 percentage points** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.

SCIENCE

- A total of **80,150** Regular Program Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Science test. **Seventy-six (76)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **514**. This number is an **increase from 2005 of 5 percentage points** in the number of students passing on the first attempts.
- A total of **7,236** Special Education Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Science test. **Thirty-five (35)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **492**. This number is an **increase from 2005 of 4 percentage points** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.
- A total of **1,450** Limited English Proficient/English Language Learner Grade 11 First-time Test Takers took the Science test. **Thirty-two (32)** percent met the passing standard with a mean scale score of **492**. This is an **increase from 2005 of 6 percentage points** in the number of students passing on the first attempt.

Figure 1

Percent Grade 11 First-time Test Takers Passing GHS GT English Language Arts, Spring Administration 2002-2006

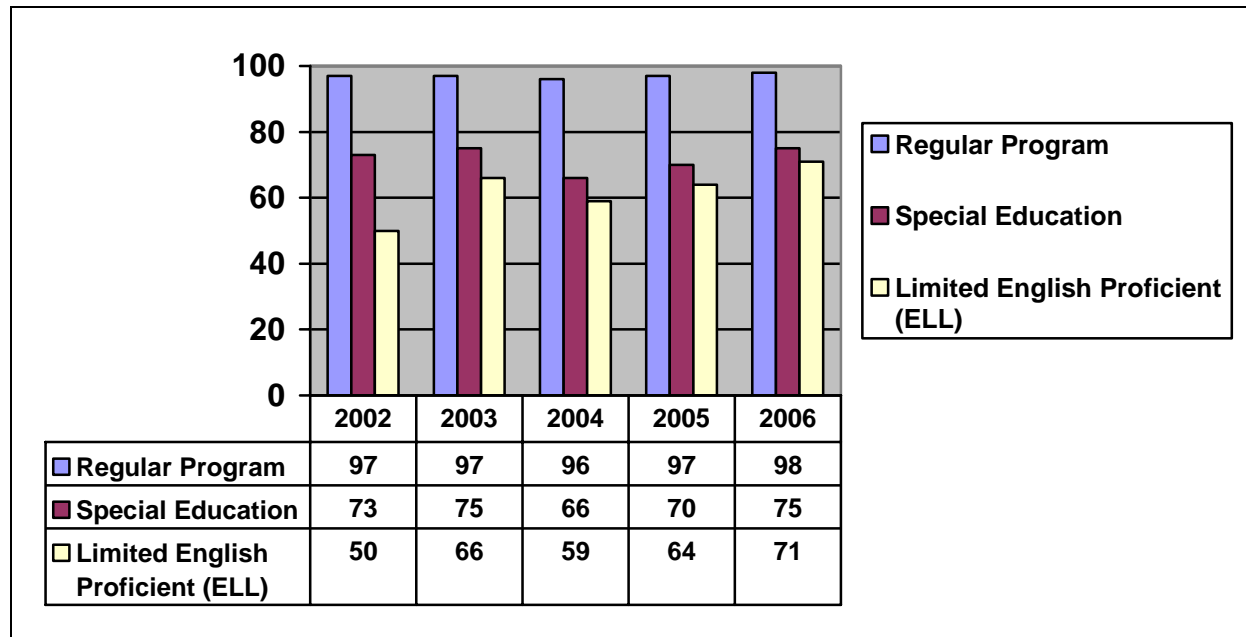


Table 1

GHS GT English Language Arts, Percent Passing and Five Year Gain Scores by Group, 2002 - 2006

Student Category	Test Year					Gain Scores*
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Grade 11 Regular Program, First-time Test Takers	97%	97%	96%	97%	98%	+1
Special Education, First-time Test Takers	73%	75%	66%	70%	75%	+2
Limited English Proficient, First-time Test Takers	50%	66%	59%	64%	71%	+21
All Test Takers by Ethnic Group:						
Asian	87%	90%	91%	93%	94%	+7
Black	90%	89%	87%	89%	91%	+1
Hispanic	80%	79%	78%	81%	85%	+5
Native American	87%	94%	89%	92%	90%	+3
White	97%	97%	96%	97%	97%	+0
Multi Ethnic	95%	95%	94%	95%	96%	+1

* Gain Score is calculated as [Percent Passing for 2006 – Percent Passing for 2002] and is reported as percentage point increase.

Figure 2

Percent Grade 11 First-time Test Takers Passing GHSMT Mathematics, Spring Administration 2002 - 2006

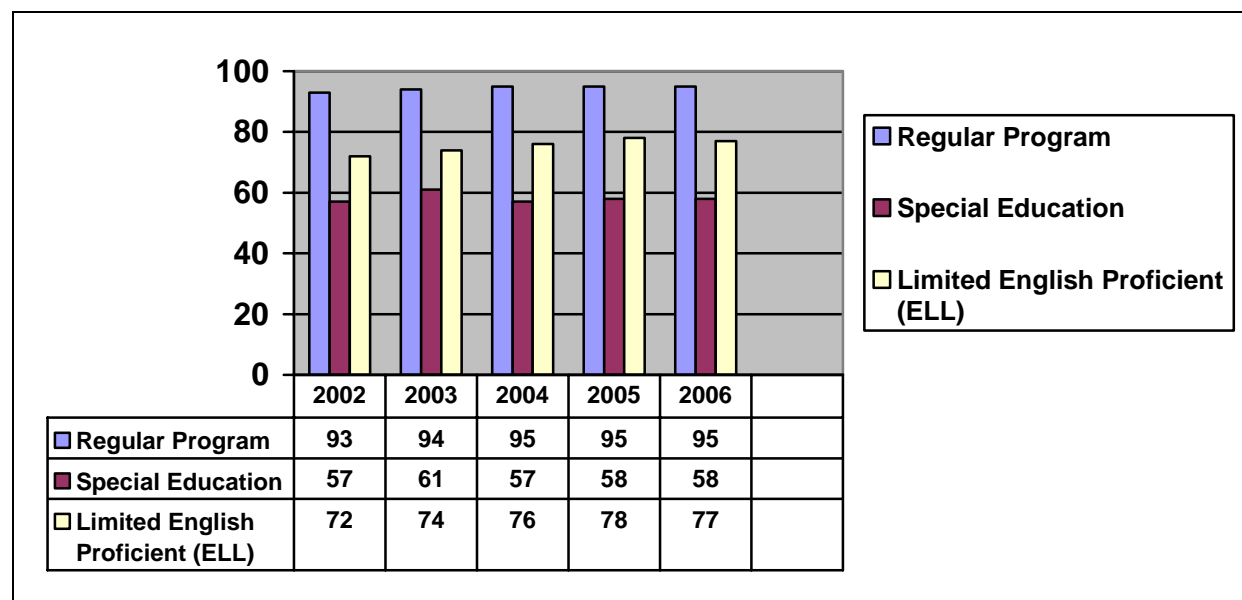


Table 2

GHSMT Mathematics, Percent Passing and Five Year Gain Scores by Group, 2002 - 2006

Student Category	Test Year					Gain Scores*
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Grade 11 Regular Program, First-time Test Takers	93%	94%	95%	95%	95%	+2
Special Education, First-time Test Takers	57%	61%	57%	58%	58%	+1
Limited English Proficient, First-time Test Takers	72%	74%	76%	78%	77%	+5
All Test Takers by Ethnic Group:						
Asian	95%	94%	96%	97%	96%	+1
Black	77%	78%	81%	80%	81%	+4
Hispanic	82%	79%	82%	84%	85%	+3
Native American	81%	86%	88%	88%	86%	+5
White	94%	94%	95%	95%	95%	+1
Multi Ethnic	91%	90%	91%	91%	90%	-1

Figure 3

Percent Grade 11 First-time Test Takers Passing GHS GT Social Studies, Spring Administration 2002 - 2006

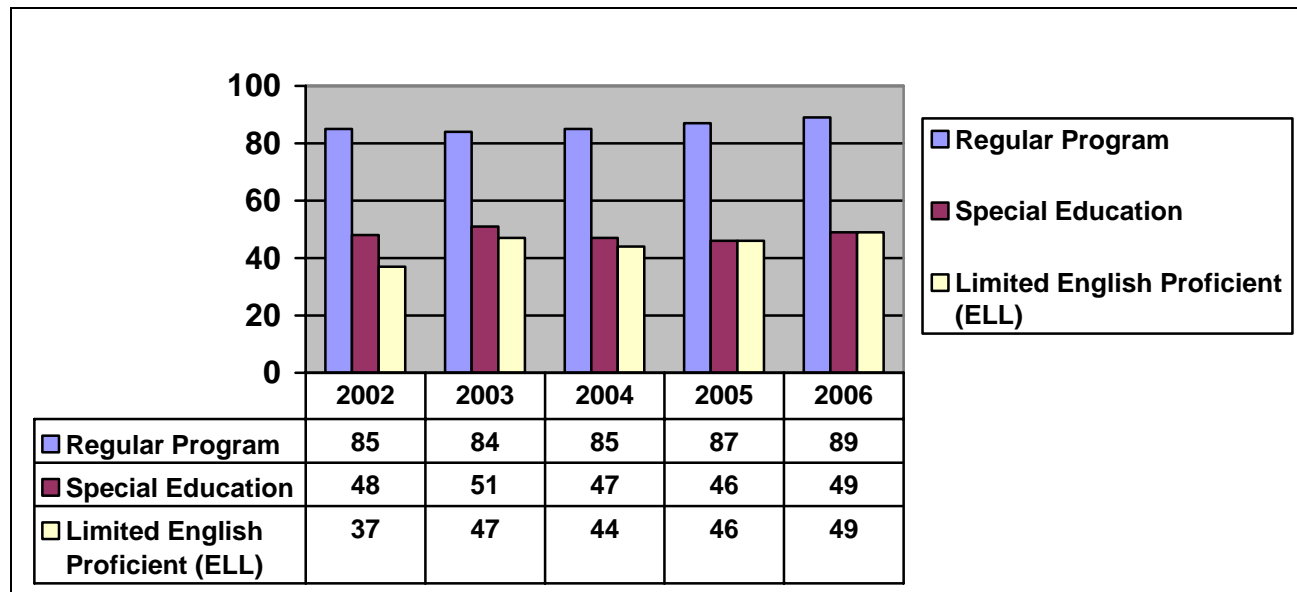


Table 3

GHS GT Social Studies, Percent Passing and Five Year Gain Scores by Group, 2002 - 2006

Student Category	Test Year					Gain Scores*
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Grade 11 Regular Program, First-time Test Takers	85%	84%	85%	87%	89%	+4
Special Education, First-time Test Takers	48%	51%	47%	46%	49%	+1
Limited English Proficient, First-time Test Takers	37%	47%	44%	46%	49%	+12
All Test Takers by Ethnic Group:						
Asian	78%	79%	83%	85%	86%	+8
Black	62%	60%	62%	64%	69%	+7
Hispanic	65%	59%	60%	65%	68%	+3
Native American	73%	80%	74%	76%	77%	+4
White	87%	86%	86%	88%	89%	+2
Multi Ethnic	84%	82%	81%	80%	83%	-1

Figure 4

Percent Grade 11 First-time Test Takers Passing GHSGT Science, Spring Administration 2002 - 2006

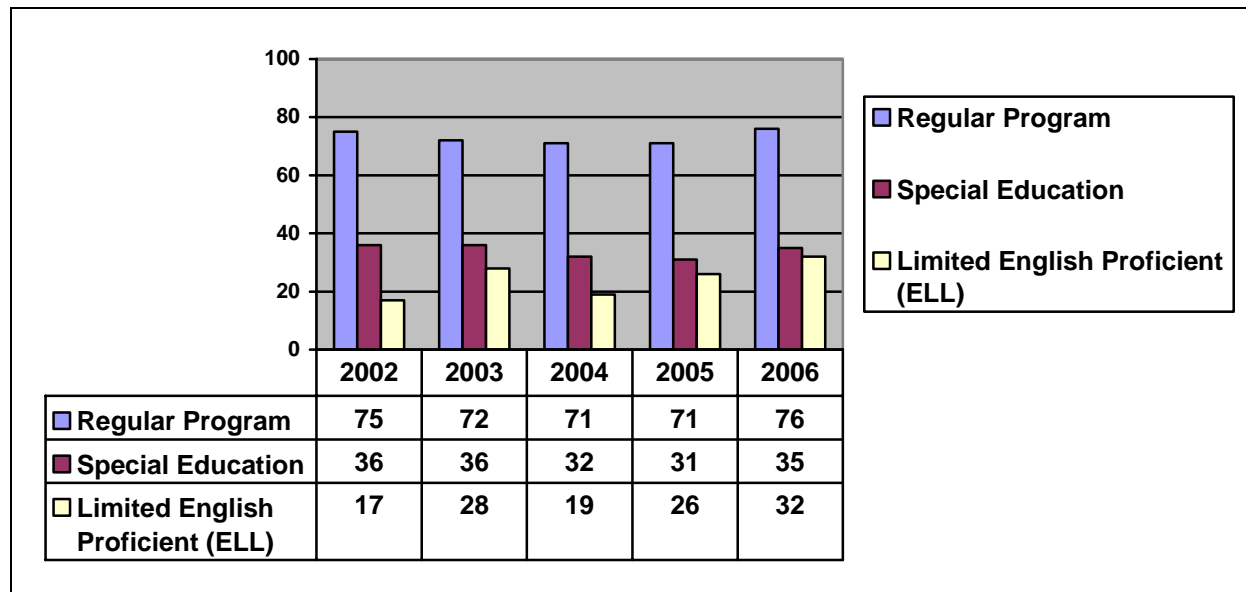


Table 4

GHSGT Science, Percent Passing and Five Year Gain Scores by Group, 2002 - 2006

Student Category	Test Year					Gain Scores*
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Grade 11 Regular Program, First-time Test Takers	75%	72%	71%	71%	76%	+1
Special Education, First-time Test Takers	36%	36%	32%	31%	35%	-1
Limited English Proficient, First-time Test Takers	17%	28%	19%	26%	32%	+15
All Test Takers by Ethnic Group:						
Asian	66%	63%	66%	69%	73%	+7
Black	48%	41%	40%	41%	46%	-2
Hispanic	45%	37%	36%	41%	46%	+1
Native American	62%	63%	56%	58%	63%	+1
White	81%	77%	75%	75%	79%	-2
Multi Ethnic	72%	68%	63%	61%	65%	-7

Table 5
GHS GT – Percent Passing, 2006 Spring Main Administration

Student Category	Percent Passing Content Area			
	English Language Arts	Math	Social Studies	Science
Grade 11 Regular Program, First-time Test Takers	98%	95%	89%	76%
Special Education, First-time Test Takers	75%	58%	49%	35%
Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners, First-time Test Takers	71%	77%	49%	32%
Gender: (All Test Takers Included)				
Female	95%	89%	79%	60%
Male	93%	89%	81%	67%
Ethnic Group: (All Test Takers Included)				
Asian	94%	96%	86%	73%
African American	91%	81%	69%	46%
Hispanic	85%	85%	68%	46%
Native American	90%	86%	77%	63%
White	97%	95%	89%	79%
Multi Ethnic	96%	90%	83%	65%